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THE DIRECTOR'S MONTHLY REVIEW

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:: :: CENTRAL SECRETARIATE OF SODALITIES OF OUR LADY :: ::

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Inducing Sodalists to Meditate
on Mary's virtues.

Love of Mary the source of fervor. The root and foundation of all Sodality fervor are love and reverence for the Mother of God. Today every skilful Director knows very well that the purpose of the Sodality will easily be attained when the Sodalists have been imbued with filial love for the Blessed Virgin. That this was the opinion entertained long ago by the first Directors of the Sodality of Our Lady, and confirmed by experience, is clear from the example of a most distinguished man, to whom the first Sodalities of Belgium and Germany were much indebted: Father Francis Coster, S. J., the friend and companion of St. Peter Canisius.

Father Coster, who was the first to establish the Sodality in Belgium and Germany, published a book of meditations on the Life of the Blessed Virgin Mary which can be used today. Exhorting the Sodalists to study and piety, he says in the preface.

Piety and Learning essential to Apostles

" As for you, my dear Sodalists, who have such an opportunity to live piously and adorn your minds with sound learning, do not neglect your opportunity. Two things are necessary for the man who works among men and devotes himself to souls, namely, *purity of life and learning*. Little will be done for the good of others by a man who is learned but bad, or by one who is pious but uninstructed. Hence it will be much to your advantage and to the good of the Christian commonwealth, if you make good use of your age, this place and its opportunities, and give your attention to both virtue and learning with the help of the Virgin Mother ".

There follows a more lengthy exhortation to Sodalists to meditate on the virtues of the Blessed Virgin.

One of the best helps to know the Virgin Mother is serious and frequent contemplation of her manner of life as it appears it the sacred Scriptures and in the writings of the Fathers. By raising our minds to her in holy meditation, not only will we know and venerate her holiness, majesty and power, but

Thus we will become

1. **Beloved of Mary.** By renewing the memory of her, we will be at the same time more pleasing to her. For though the humble Virgin, while she lived our human life, shrank from the slightest praise of herself, now that she is in heaven, she graciously receives honors and praises, since she is now secure forever in the place consecrated to the glory and the praises of the Saints.

2. **Defenders of Mary**. We will defend and spread the honor of the Mother of Christ with all our might, against heretics, the seed of the serpent and haters of the Virgin Mother of God.

3. **Imitators of Mary**. We will study to imitate her holy life and ways. Although we know that Christ was given us as a model to imitate, our sloth nevertheless excuses itself on the ground that it cannot measure up to His divine nature and power. But if we be asked why we do not at least imitate the sanctity of the Virgin, no excuse can be given, since she was only a human being not God, a woman, and poor.

4. **Clients of Mary**. We will beg her prayers and with them we shall gain grace, favor and aid, and with her powerful help we shall be assisted in all our affairs, and at last shall end this life with a happy death.

Three graces to ask

a) **Her Prayers.** That she will pray for us to her Son, since out of reverence for her, He certainly grants all her petitions.

b) **Her Help**. That she will not only aid us with her prayers but that she will support us with her power as Queen of Heaven and Mistress of the World. We see that mortals, though hedged round with infirmity, can do much by their prayers, and can also use the powers God has given them, to assist others, the

rich employing their wealth, princes their power, and learned men their knowledge. What wonder then if we confess that the *Saints*, confirmed in their happiness and hence reigning in heaven, not only pray but also truly help us in our necessities according to the degree of their glory? For they shall '*bind kings with fetters and nobles with manacles of iron*'. (Ps. 149, 8).

c) **Her presence at our death.** Just as we received the Son through the Virgin Mother, so through her we shall receive the Son. True to her title, "Gate of Heaven", it is a joy to the Virgin to pass us on to Christ; she rejoices in offering us to her son with her own hands for He redeemed us at the high price of His blood, His sorrows and His death; she rejoices in causing joy to Our Lord who is pleased that His blood has not been lost upon us.

5. **Become like Mary**. Meditations made upon the sweetest of Virgins, usually create an admirable sweetness in the soul. As the Virgin is sweet in herself and "our sweetness", so too the remembrance of her is sweet, conversation about her is sweet, and absolutely everything which relates to her is sweet. Many have observed that the hymns, antiphons and other compositions which are sung in the Church in praise of the Virgin have a peculiar sweetness for the mind and senses of Catholics. St. Bernard, who won the name of the "Mellifluous Doctor" by his delightful diction, as he never leaves off the praises of Mary, is said to have drawn the sweetness of his speech from meditation upon her. And whoever is frequently in the company of the sweetest of Virgins, gains for himself something of her placid manners, and her sweet interior spirit.

Follow Method in Meditating

Just as it is very important how we look at a painting, whether lightly or fixedly, from an angle or directly, attentively or absent-mindedly, to be moved or simply to admire the art of it; so it is very important for us to follow a certain method in our meditations on the Virgin, and to excite various affections in ourselves. For if we meditate simply to know, or to teach others, or to find pleasure in the beauty of her ways, we will gain very little for ourselves. On the other hand, our contemplation of her will be profitable if we:

1. **Thank God for gifts to Mary**. If we rise from the life and glory of the Virgin to admiration and love and thanksgiving to God: thanks to Him Who embraced the human race with such love that He not only clothed Himself in our human flesh, but chose for His mother from among men, a Virgin, adorned with all virtue, merciful, full of love for us; thanks to Him Who gave her a mother's authority over Himself, so that she could say to God (Luc. 2, 48): '*Son why hast Thou done so to us?*' Thanks to Him Who gave her such power over all creatures, that she should be the Queen of Heaven and the Mistress of the Angels, Moderatrix of the world. Thanks to Him Who inspired her with such love for men, that she should show herself a mother to us, a patron and an advocate and mediatrix with her Son.

2. **Resolve to Imitate Mary**. If we model our way of life on that of the Virgin Mother; if we imitate her profound humility, ardent charity, and her interior peace of soul and keep the whole interior and exterior man in proper order.

3. **Contemplate her many virtues.** When we contemplate Mary, we must place before our eyes, a most chaste Virgin, serious in her ways, a lover of silence, her mind intent on the will of God, void of perturbation. Sweet and affable, but not frivolous. Modest but not moody. Prudent and attentive in word and deed. Humble of heart, self-despising, gentle and meek, brave in difficulties; patient in adversity and not cast down, restrained in prosperity, solicitous about her duties but without anxiety. Exceedingly firm in her faith in God, sure in hope, ardent in charity, exact in obedience, entirely resigned to the slightest expression of God's will. Finally, so composed in her exterior as to be revered and loved by all; so disposed in her interior, that nothing low, nothing improper, nothing inordinate should be in her, but that the thoughts of her soul, her natural affections and propensities should be perfectly obedient to reason, and reason in all things subject to God; her will so perfect that it should command her members or powers nothing contrary to right reason.

4. **See Her in Joys and Sorrows.** If we would excite ourselves to affections similar to hers, let us rejoice with her rejoicing, sympathize with her sorrowing congratulate her in her glories. In this life, she frequently experienced the most intense anguish of soul owing to the hardships, wrongs and passion of her Son. Often too she rejoiced and '*exulted with joy unspeakable and glorified*' (1 Petr. 1, 8) because of the love or presence or glory of her Son. But in sorrows, her soul was not cast down, nor did it exult vainly in prosperity.

5. **Affections; Resolutions; Practices**. If devotion moves us, let us honor and venerate her, and particularly:

1. Let us wonder at her dignity as Mother of God, her humility as a Virgin, her glory as a Queen.

2. Let us congratulate her on the immense benefits God conferred upon her.

3. Let us love her because she is most loved of God and most loving towards us.

4. Let us rejoice that we have such a Lady, Patron and Advocate in heaven.

5. Let us boldly preach her praises.

6. Let us salute her reverently with the Angelic Salutation and other prayers.

7. Let us thank her for the benefits which she never ceases to shower upon us, for her maternal care, favor and protection.

8. Let us humbly beg her prayers and help for ourselves, and for our neighbors both living and dead.

9. Let us consecrate, dedicate and offer to God through her, ourselves and all that belongs to us.

10. Let us devoutly show her such veneration and honor, interior and exterior, as the Church teaches us.

If we meditate on the Virgin in these ways, we will increase in virtues and make the Mother of God propitious to us and we will reconcile Christ her Son to us for He delights in seeing His Mother honored.

Here is plenty of matter for treating with Sodalists about the way of considering the Blessed Virgin's virtues.

Apostolate of the Press

Catholic indifference to bad press. Catholics have failed for a long time to make any opposition to the baneful insolence of the bad press. Thus " *mala per longas invaluere moras* ". Thus the enemy has been able to forestall us in the whole field. And it was not by sloth or idleness alone that Catholics were held back from press activity ; there was also a certain defective vision which made all other things seem more important than the forming of a correct public opinion regarding religion. Just as in the social question, so too in the question of the press, the almost prophetic utterances of Leo XIII were either ignored or merely praised while their execution was indefinitely put off. Very few were found to say with Bishop Ketteler of Mainz, so highly esteemed by Leo XIII, that if St. Paul were to return to earth today, he would run a daily newspaper.

However, " *Better late than never* " certainly applies here, and we shall set out briefly

How to oppose the bad press.

1. **Warn insistently of danger.** In the first place, the magnitude of this danger must be vividly presented to and well understood by all who love the Church and are fired with apostolic zeal. It should be made clear to all that there is hardly a greater danger hanging over religion and good morals today than the anti-Catholic press. It must be burned into the souls of the good how shameful and fatal it is that bad journals should surpass good ones, as they often do, in number, extent, variety and circulation ; that the great bulk of men should be daily inoculated with their venom ; that the enemies of the Church should gradually get all power in public affairs into their own hands through these publications. In the pulpit, in Sodalities and in other places as well, frequent discourses should be held on the importance of the press, and of the injuries which religion suffers through bad periodicals.

Unmask insidious attacks. Examples must be given ; particularly dangerous articles should be read and refuted so that it may be plain to all how methodically and how insidiously these papers attack religion and the Church ; the good must be aroused to organize and fight these strong and wily enemies. Experience shows that zeal for the defense of truth and the Church is always very much excited if examples are used to show the way in which wicked writers make their attacks. This is a fruitful suggestion for Directors of Sodalities ; it will both supply a healthy variety in the life of the Sodality and also give a strong impulse to Sodalists to do something worth while for the Catholic cause.

2. **Attack and defend.** Once a spirit of action is aroused, work should begin. The duty of Catholics in regard to the press is twofold : defensive and offensive, that is to say, bad writings are to be attacked and driven out of existence ; while good writings are to be published, read, and circulated.

A) **Repel bad writings.**

Don't read, buy or keep them. Every one should print deeply on his memory that every Catholic who, without real necessity, buys, reads, or keeps at home a bad newspaper or periodical, not only sins against his conscience and the laws of the Church (and should accuse himself of it in confession, since it is as much a sin as missing Mass), but he is also a *traitor to the Catholic cause*, a renegade who adds to the riches and influence of our enemies.

" But reading them does not harm me. " Such excuses are offered even by good people. " It is not a question of saving your miserable hide, " replies Father Kolb. " The point is that *you act cowardly and dishonorably* if you give the enemies of religion a single penny, or if you take even one step down into their camp. " If a Catholic periodical is offered to an anti-Catholic, he refuses it with contempt ; he will not give the hundredth part of a cent for it. Let it be a point of honor with us never to give a penny for a bad periodical, or dignify its contents with our attention by reading or comment.

Protect others. Another answer to the " *doesn't harm me* " protest is this : " Granted for the sake of argument (though it is not true). But it does injure those who see you reading those papers. It injures your children, your servants and your guests. They find such papers in your home. They think they are good and they read them, because they have found them in your house. "

Catholic writings suffice. Why should we care so much for what is so foreign to us, our faith, our morals and our tastes ? Why do we go bowing and scraping to our enemies and begging for their wisdom ? Why do we throw ourselves at their feet like dogs, to devour the unwholesome foods which they cast to us from their kitchens ? Let them eat their own cooking ; we must look elsewhere for better and cleaner food.

Protest privately and publicly. It is not enough for us to abstain from poisoned food, but we must strive to withdraw others from it. So every

good person should make it a point to protest wherever he finds bad literature among Catholics or other decent folk. One must reason with one's children, appeal to the honor of the family, dissuade them, and explain the bad faith of the evil press. Catholics should not tamely tolerate the admission of such writings into public libraries, schools and clubs, nor the insertion of notices in them, nor their sale in Catholic places of business or territory. Catholic merchants, manufacturers and bankers should be dissuaded from advertising in such papers. In public meetings and manifestations, protests should be made against such dailies, the duties of Catholics towards them should be explained and urged, their calumnious and immoral character should be publicly made known so that all good persons may be turned away from them, and so that those evil papers may themselves realize that they cannot do everything with impunity.

Good effect of constant protests. The scope and reason of such agitation is to induce those who through inadvertence have bought or subscribed to bad newspapers, to write the editors, recalling their subscription, and indicating that they do so, because they have found the paper inimical to the Catholic religion and morals. If many act thus simultaneously, there will be good results, as publishers fear nothing more than the loss of readers (1). Experience proves that constant opposition to bad newspapers and their systematic rejection by Catholic families, brings its rewards: Catholics are kept clear of numberless dangers to their souls and what is more, bad papers become much more cautious and often change entirely.

B) **Good writings are to be spread.**

It is not enough to oppose bad writings. Good ones must be published, read and spread abroad. Fire must be fought by fire; writings by writings.

Buy and read Catholic literature. Good Catholics must be the first to read and subscribe to Catholic newspapers, books and literature. They should consider it a disgrace to be found ignorant in such matters. It certainly is a disgrace to have read all profane writers, especially those whose praises are exaggerated beyond their merits by our enemies, and who are held up by them as the very summit of perfection in writing; many readers of this type have gone through the writings of Zola and Anatole France, Ewers and Weininger, but they are strangers to our writers, historians, and novelists, and of course they know nothing of St. Augustine, St. Paul or even the Gospels.

(1) How anxious they are in this matter will appear from the following example. A large newspaper was about to publish a humorous story in which the following comparison occurred: "*He was as fond of liquor as a rope-maker*". At the last moment before going to press, the head manager happened to notice the phrase and ordered the whole story to be dropped. "*We have seven rope makers among our subscribers,*" said the manager "*and we cannot afford to offend them*". But it is immaterial if Catholics are offended; they will take anything tamely.

Praise Catholic writings. We should try to bring others to know and esteem good writings. Popular opinion about literature is like a dirigible airship: if you praise any book or author very much, interest increases at once in that direction. If you are careful to mention that you saw a splendid article on this or that subject in such and such a paper, and that generally things are very nicely treated in it, others will soon begin to read it. When finished with their periodicals, some lend them to others or send them to hospitals, jails, missions, etc. This scheme is used by Sodalities in many places, to spread the knowledge of good books and papers.

Advertise and patronize advertisers. Our efforts should be directed to increasing the income of good journals, especially through advertisements, which contribute more to the support of newspapers than the subscriptions. Catholic merchants, manufacturers and bankers ought to be urged to advertise in good newspapers; and buyers (e. g. religious orders) should give the preference to goods which they find advertised in Catholic journals, and when ordering, they should mention the advertisement as the cause of their preference.

Finally, the whole Catholic body should often be exhorted to read and spread good literature; popular meetings for the purpose being held and frequent mention being made of it in congresses, associations, etc.

The foregoing will suffice as regards giving ordinary help to the good press. Any Catholic or Sodalist can oppose bad literature in the ways indicated. Next month we shall treat briefly of more important action in favor of the Catholic press.

(To be concluded).

The Evidence Movement and the Sodalities

By Father Henry Browne, S. J.

Detailed suggestions. Having discussed the suitability of certain Sodalities, in English-speaking countries, for assisting the Evidence Movement, it may be expected that some detailed suggestions in support of the view we advocated, should now be given.

Difficulty of the Work. It is no easy matter, all must allow, to adress a heterogeneous crowd upon matters of religion. Any man who gives the appearance of wanting to air his own piety in public, will be

thought a fool, and worse than that, a common nuisance.

Growing Apostasy, Guild's Justification. The principle underlying the Guild of Catholic Evidence seems to be that when a special crisis occurs, men are accustomed to take exceptional measures. It appears at least to our Cardinal Archbishop and the other members of the English hierarchy, that the moment has arrived when the Catholic Church must come out into the open. By default, she is now the only body of so-called Christians which is prepared to give definite leading to the people, who are rapidly drifting away from all religious influences. Guild speakers must make their audience feel that they are not wanting in the proper spirit of reticence, but are driven to their work from purely objective causes.

Lay Speakers quite possible. Apart from the necessity of conveying this conviction, we must not exaggerate the difficulties of the case. A man of average capacity, if normally constituted, will not shrink from the expression of his convictions, given the opportunity and a suitable audience. As a matter of fact, British and American workers would be quite slow to hold themselves incapable of maintaining their views on subjects of deep concern to themselves and their associates, — for instance in what they think is important in regard to civic, political, economic, or even fiscal questions.

Speakers disclaim omniscience. The difficulty about religion for Catholics is of course, the danger of putting the case wrongly. To meet this. some proper preparation is imperatively required; but what is far more important than actual knowledge about religion (of cognate subjects, such as Catholic history), is to be sure that speakers understand their own limitations as to knowledge, and that they shall have no difficulty in admitting them to the crowd. If, for instance, a young speaker protests that he is not a walking encyclopedia, and must have notice of recondite questions, he will be more applauded for his modesty than despised for his lack of information. The crowd is rarely without some common sense.

How Sodality can help Guild. Let us suppose that a Sodality of men has been persuaded that they can and should try to promote the Evidence work. Clearly any united association of Catholics will be in a good position for providing the zeal and mutual encouragement which is necessary. The method of procedure would be something like this:

1. **Learn what Guild is.** They will get some experienced Evidence worker, priest or layman, to give an address putting clearly before the Sodality the spirit and the methods of the new movement. This address should if possible be followed by general discussion. No immediate action should be taken by the members who should be asked to study the matter for themselves, by attending in-door and out-door meetings of the Guild, by reading, thinking, and praying over the whole thing.

2. **Form Religion Study-classes.** The next point will be most crucial. It will consist in forming a study-class in connection with the Sodality, under proper guidance, not as yet with a view to external work, but merely to deepen the knowledge of their religion, its doctrines and practices, in the past as well as the present. If possible, some priest should interest himself in this work, though he may have to delegate to lay-persons much of its drudgery.

3. **Train Volunteer Speakers.** By degrees volunteers will be found, *some* for private propaganda, *some* for out-door speaking. We deal chiefly with the latter, but would premise that in-door work should be a most valuable product, even if regarded as a by-product of the movement. These volunteers for field-work must now undergo a more severe training. They must be well heckled as a test, and they must prove sufficient knowledge to be able to take to the platform, or soap-box, safely. They may at first receive a licence to speak only on certain specified subjects, though they should be ready to deal, perhaps by some method of parry, with very vague and general questions.

4. **Commence Actual Practice.** It is most important that the future speakers be not kept too long without actual practice. At first, they will have to deal with an artificial crowd formed of Catholics who are themselves partly in training; and these may sometimes prove quite as exacting and even more troublesome than an average real crowd of outsiders. But the students must learn to face the music such as it is (and it varies greatly) at an early stage; because till they do this, they are only " beating the air " in comparison with the real thing. Their intensive study ought always to go hand in hand with some degree of practice. It is quite evident that this procedure entails risks and problems — but *solvitur ambulando.* We repeat, let your speaker know that he does not know all about it, and he will be comparatively safe. Even if he does make an error, it can be put right; and often it is a good plan for a succeeding speaker gently to correct or soften down some answer given rashly by a comparative beginner. If absolute infallibility were required in all speakers or preachers, who would be found to say anything?

We must stop here; but if permitted by the Editor, we have still something to add as to various crowds and the way to handle them.

PRACTICAL QUESTIONS

Can the dead be admitted to the Sodality? By no means. There is an answer of the Sacred Congregation of Indulgences against it: " Can the faithful who have departed this life be inscribed in any Sodality so that they may profit by the suffrages which are enjoyed after death by others who joined the Sodality during life? *Answer:* No... " (Aug. 14, 1889; cfr. Fr. Mullan's " *The Sodality of Our Lady Studied in the Documents* ", 1846, 1876).

When are the new officers of the Sodality to be elected? Nothing is strictly prescribed in the matter; but the 21st Rule says that " *The Officers are changed usually once a year, at a time determined by rule or custom* ". Where the local custom is not fixed, three occasions may be indicated:

First, the beginning of the school year. At that time all (not students only) are tired of vacation and

naturally inclined to work afresh. Hence a change of officers would naturally be acceptable.

Second, the end of the school year. The advantage of an election at this time is that all the Sodalists know each other quite well, and their recollection of the year's events is still quite vivid; hence the Sodalists can form a good judgment of the fitness of the candidates for office.

Third, during the year, about the time of the *titular feast of the Sodality*, which will increase in solemnity and importance if it be made to mark the end of the old year and the beginning of the new by the installation of the new officers.

Nevertheless, as experienced Directors know, it is well at times to *have the offices refilled unexpectedly*. It happens among men and women, and even among the young folks, that factions exist within the Sodality, each of which is striving to impose its candidate on the other. In such a case, to prevent further discord, it is advisable to call for an election unexpectedly in the course of a meeting, proposing three names for each of the higher offices, and having the election take place at once, without giving an opportunity for murmuring and hatching plots. Indeed, in an extreme case, if the Director sees that the discord is too great for an election, it would not be imprudent for him to dispense with an election and *name the Officers himself*.

This, however, is *an extreme measure*, to which the Director should have resort only under pressure of real necessity; otherwise, he would be signally lacking in prudence. The wise Director will always do his utmost to encourage and admit his subjects to take part in the government of the Sodality. All will obey better and more willingly, a government of their own election. A Director would make a great mistake in using all his power at all times, or in thinking that the Sodalists, even adults, should be treated like school-boys. The Director must not be governed simply by the cold statement of his legal rights; he must also take account of life as it is.

Is it desirable that Sodalists confess to their Director? The practice certainly has great advantages, but it would be very imprudent for the Director in any way to urge his Sodalists to the practice, or give any indication that he desired it. One way is open to him for attracting the Sodalists to his confessional: let him receive them willingly when they come and be a good confessor; Then they will come of their own accord.

Is there any need of a special banner for the Sodality? Certainly there is no harm in having one; the solemnity of religious functions is increased by it, and such a symbol is not without its psychological importance. Still it is an error to worry about the banner if the Sodality itself is not well established and things of much greater moment are lacking to it. Often through vanity or an excessive esteem of externals, the Director and his Sodalists have no more urgent business than the obtaining of a banner which must be bigger, richer and more elegant than that of any other Sodality in the parish or the town. In the meantime, the Sodalists may be very negligent about coming to meetings and to General Communions; there may be no Section and no Academy, or merely nominal ones; may be even the common religious duties of all Catholics are not observed by the Sodalists. If this be the case, what ground is there to be proud of a banner which serves more for show than for truth? There certainly are distinguished Sodalities which have no banner, and others which have banners but which unfortunately do not deserve either banners or the name of the Sodality.

How often should General Communions be required? My Sodalists (who are men) are also for the most part members of other associations which require a General Communion every month. "Father", said one of them to me recently", "on the first Sunday of the month, I must go to a General Communion with the Association of the Men of the Parish, on the second Sunday with the Holy Name Society, on the third with the Pious Union of the Altar, and on the last with the Sodality. When can I go to Communion in peace alone? (Circumstances prevent me from going during the week.) And again, when can I go to a "General" Communion with my wife and children?"

Answer. Really there is no reason why, in such circumstances, we should be rigid in urging the Sodality custom. Nor do the Rules themselves intend that Communion should by all means and always be received by the Sodality in a body, where it is certain that the Sodalists actually go to Holy Communion at other times and even often during the month. Hence the answer to such Sodalists is let them go now and again to Holy Communion with the Sodality, and as for the rest if they wish to go alone or with their families, on the day appointed for the Sodality, let them do so after getting leave from their Director.

Monthly Patrons. Are there Monthly Patron leaflets which should be used and distributed in all Sodalities?

Answer: It is a pious custom in use in many places, but it is not prescribed by the Rules. The prudent Director will consider whether in his circumstances, the custom should be introduced or not. Some like the practice and some do not.

The Sodality and Parishes. Secular parish priests in this part of the world, says a correspondent, wish all societies to depend upon the Parish, or rather to be absorbed by it, because, as they say, the parish is the original and divinely instituted Sodality.

Answer: 1. The life of the parish is certainly more important than the Sodalities; hence we must strive to promote parish life through our Sodalities and also see to it that Parish priests have no ground to complain of an exaggerated separatism on our part.

2. Nevertheless, while Parishes exist (whether divinely instituted or not is another question), there also exist exempt orders approved by the Church which must freely develop their institutions; moreover, there are other associations approved by the Bishops themselves, which from their very purpose are interparochial (such are many Catholic educational and social organizations). So there should not be exaggeration in any direction.

Urging attendance at meetings. It is a bad sign if Sodalists are permitted to be absent with impunity

and without excuse from the ordinary meetings of the Sodality. The first thing in every association is to live the common life, which in the Sodality is found especially in the ordinary meetings. One who makes no account of the common exercises of the Sodality may be a fine Catholic, but he is not a Sodalist. In the meetings, the Sodalists hear the instruction and exhortations of the Director, and in union of forces and counsel, they attend socially the school of self-sanctification and of apostolic work. Hence, the 41st Rule says with emphasis: *" All should be extremely careful to attend at the appointed time, the general meetings of the Sodality, ordinary and extraordinary."*

Hence the Director should *inculcate the importance of this Rule on all candidates before their admission* into the Sodality. Let him state clearly that in the promise which is made in the ceremony of admission, the faithful observance of this Rule is included in a special manner. Let him explain that this is a duty which every Sodalist is in honor bound to discharge and that the service of Mary must be preferred to all other cares and occupations.

Neither is it enough to have given admonitions on the subject. Such is the inconstancy of human nature, that *external vigilance must be exercised;* otherwise, we will neglect to do the very thing which we have willed to do. Hence every live Sodality keeps careful watch and uses the necessary helps, gently but firmly urging its Sodalists to faithfulness in this matter. And such vigilance should not be lightly abandoned. Experience amply demonstrates, that wherever vigilance has been relaxed, in a short time, only half or even a quarter of the Sodalists are regular attendants at meetings.

That attendance must be watched is clear from the 41st Rule, already quoted from, where it continues: *" Attendance is indicated in various ways, according to the custom of the Sodality. Among the customs most recommended is the employment of an attendance card delivered by the Sodalist with his name to the officer designated. Sodalists who cannot be present at a meeting should report, personally or by letter, as soon as possible, the cause of their absence to the Father Director, to whom it will belong to judge whether the reason alleged is proper."*

Hence:

1. There are various ways of checking up attendance, according to the character and customs of individual Sodalities, but everywhere in some way, the presence or absence of Sodalists is to be looked into.

2. The reason for absence must be given to the Director, and he has the right to decide as to its sufficiency.

The objection is often made that such vigilance can be employed with boys and girls, less freely with grown persons, but that it is entirely *out of the question with educated and influential men.*

The answer is that *everything depends on the manner* in which this vigilance is explained and exercised. If a good, courteous explanation is given of the necessity of such a help for our frail human nature, and if Sodalists or candidates are kindly requested to subject themselves to this regulation in the interests of discipline and order, no difficulty will be experienced in execution, as is amply proved in the most flourishing Sodalities, even of nobles.

Can one be a member of two Sodalities at the same time? An Editor of one of our Sodality magazines has written us as follows about our answer regarding the *transfer of a Sodalist from one Sodality to another:* " I cannot agree with the solution given in A. O. Because *the rule does not require* that a Sodalist who moves to another place and finds there a Sodality which suits him, should so pass over to the second that he ceases to be a member of the first. "

The 30th Rule says: " Sodalists once duly received into a Sodality, remain members of it always, unless they give it up of their own accord or are dismissed as unworthy. " To a question whether one could be a member of two Confraternities at the same time, the Sacred Congregation replied in the affirmative. Whence one may properly infer that a person can be a member of two or even more Sodalities at the same time. Besides, if he passes to another Sodality, he can remain juridically a member of the first Sodality. And Sodalists, especially women, cannot be induced by any means to pass to a new Sodality in the place where they live, if they know that on that account their names will be erased from the list of the first Sodality. So we had better say in this case, that they belong to both Sodalities at the same time.

Answer: This solution does not appeal to us.

We willingly concede that the words of the 30th (and 47th) Rules *can* be understood as our critic has indicated above; but we do not think that they *should* be so understood. It is true also that the Rules never speak of " passing ", as such, nor of *dismissal* of a Sodalist from his first Sodality when he passes to another. But at the same time, the contrary doctrine cannot be inferred from the Rules. For Rule 30 cited above seems to speak only of the *perpetuity of membership in the Sodality* and prescinds from the question of passage to another Sodality, a matter treated of in Rule 47. The word " the same " (eiusdem) can be understood in a general sense to signify " *numerically the same* Sodality " Rule *47*. The word " the same " (eiusdem) can be understood in a general sense to signify " the same ", namely *the Sodality.* But if you insist that " numerically the same Sodality " is meant (and you can do so by emphasizing " a " (" aliquam "), there still remains the phrase " unless they give it up of their own accord ", which can be effected not only by quitting but also by passage to another Sodality. This passage is prescribed by Rule 47, where it says that a Sodalist who moves to another place and wishes to acquire the indulgences is bound to enter another Sodality. So from the Rules themselves, nothing can be inferred for certain on the question whether a person who passes from one Sodality to another must be struck off the list of the prior Sodality. But it certainly can be inferred that the Sodalist is obliged to enter a fitting Sodality in his new domicile.

But then I ask: Why can a Sodalist so passing remain a member of the former Sodality? He can acquire the indulgences only once, and that, evidently in the new Sodality.

He carries on his Sodality life in the second Sodality only. It is in this second Sodality that he must discharge his duties as a Sodalist, and it is in it that he exercises his rights as a Sodalist.. That being the case, what *juridical* bond remains with the prior Sodality? There can be nothing more than the *moral bond* of charity and piety, which justifies the keeping of his name in the book of the first Sodality, with a note saying that he passed to another Sodality and is no longer an ordinary member, strictly so called, of the first.

Neither will we insist much upon *analogy with confraternities.* I can be a member of two confraternities although they pursue similar ends, because there I can gain the indulgences of both and fulfill the duties of both, since those duties are not strictly social. I can, for example, be enrolled in two Scapular confraternities and gain the indulgences of both. But I cannot join the Confraternity of the Scapular of Mt. Carmel in two places and gain the same indulgences twice, although I fulfill the duties of the confraternity twice. In the same way, I cannot be a member of two Sodalities, aggregated to our Prima Primaria in the sense referred to, at least where the rights and duties of the Sodality can be exercised only in one place.

But you may say: The Director himself is a member of the Sodality which he governs. If therefore, he governs *three Sodalities* he is at the same time a member of all three of them.

And you may add: Sometimes a grown-up Sodalist (e. g., a coach) is a member of a Sodality of Men, while at the same time, he acts as a sub-director of a Sodality of Boys. Does he not acquire the indulgences of the second Sodality, e. g. on the day of the usual meeting or on the principal feast? He is then a member of both.

I answer: Certainly, in this and like cases, where one really *lives the social* life of two (or even three) Sodalities and at the same time, *fulfills all the duties* in both, it is probable that he belongs to all of these Sodalities and gains the indulgences peculiar to each of them.

But in our case, the supposition is different. Here it is supposed that a Sodalist passes from one Sodality to another and *does not lead the life* of a Sodalist except in the second place. In this case, his legal standing with its incident rights and duties in the first Sodality would seem to cease with the cessation of his life as a Sodalist therein.

But you object: Then, by analogy, the Sodalist character must be said to cease, where a Sodalist moves to a place where there is no Sodality fit for him. And nevertheless, Sodalists so absent are not regarded as if they had ceased to be Sodalists.

I answer: The difference lies in the fact that in this case, the Sodalist *cannot* lead the social life of the Sodality, and hence in the mean time, he is dispensed from the exercise of those social duties. But in our case, *he can* exercise them by entering into a new Sodality; therefore also *he must* enter into or pass to this one; once he has entered, his rights and duties in the first Sodality cease entirely for him, i. e., the juridical bond is broken.

The above is according to *theory.*

As regards *practice,* we believe that *the opinion we are opposing is very harmful.* Certainly *our* opinion can be harmful also if it be too crudely applied and if it be taken to mean that by passing to another Sodality, *every* bond with the first Sodality simply ceases. This should never be said; indeed, one must inculcate that a Sodalist who passes to another Sodality should, at the same time, have his name on the catalogue of the first Sodality (as stated above) and that he ought to keep up correspondence with the Director or with the first Sodality itself; besides he can be present at the festive renewal of the Consecration either in person or by letter, if he return to his former residence, he may be admitted to the meetings of the first Sodality (as a guest), etc. It is usual also to keep the diploma of the first Sodality.

Nevertheless, unless we urge the necessity of entering and of giving one's self wholly to the new Sodality, the *gravest evils will result.* For *1st,* Sodalists who pass to another Sodality, under the impression that they belong primarily to the former, will act as if they were guests in the new Sodality and *they will not wholly submit* to the Director's guidance and the activities and customs of the new Sodality. *2dly,* not fully adhering to the new Sodality, they will not fully discharge a Sodalist's duties either in it or in the other Sodality, and, as experience shows, *they will soon neglect all* Sodality life. The same may be said where a person, after growing up, does not entirely pass from the Boys' Sodality to the Men's. Thus it is that in many places no Sodality of Men or University students is fully developed, because all the adults in them feel that they are really members of the Boys' Sodality in their old College. Now they do not attend that Sodality and they neglect the one in which they are because it is not so much *theirs* as the other. *3dly.* Moreover, it is very harmful to think that one can be a Sodalist of some Sodality, although he discharges none of a Sodalist's duties in it and lives no Sodality life. Once this idea takes hold, one easily comes to *regard the Sodality as a pious confraternity* of which one can remain a member because he entered once. This does not seem to us to be the mind of the framer of the Rules of the Sodality of Our Lady, and the 47th Rule seems to favor our view.

So, leaving theory aside, *in practice,* it will be best to act as follows;

1. Instruct the candidate that *admission is for life,* and that change of place or state of life obliges the Sodalist to enter another suitable Sodality.

2. Such change leaves the Sodalist a member of the first Sodality, in a *moral* sense: i. e., he is bound to it by ties of charity and fidelity, but *juridically* he is wholly transferred to the new Sodality; in it are all his rights and duties.

3d. Henc departing Sodalists should receive *dimissorial letters* and a *recommendation* to the new Sodality.

4th. *Correspondence,* however, should be maintained with the first Sodality.

5th. To be considered a Sodalist, admission and inscription are insufficient; one must also *live the social life of a Sodalist* as far as possible.

Letters to the Editor

Spreading of Catholic Literature by Trichinopoly Sodality. After many years experience, I have found that the two most practical works of zeal among our Sodalists are, first, *the teaching of Catechism,* and, second, *the spreading of Catholic Literature.* To help them in that second most important work, we have started an *Indian Catholic Truth Society.* *** In the beginning, our Sodalists used to collect addresses of persons (non-Catholics and heathens) of a religious turn of mind and we used to send them publications. But of late the rate of postage has been so increased, that this method of apostleship is too expensive for the Sodality as a body. At present, therefore, we collect funds and each Sodalist does what he thinks best to reach his non-Catholic or non-Christian acquaintances by giving or lending some book, pamphlet, or even leaflet taken from the fund acquired by the Sodality.

Trichinopoly Sodality invites cooperation of other Sodalities. Our Sodality appealed to other Sodalities in India for help to gather funds in order to buy Catholic pamphlets and leaflets for distribution and they received substantial help from several Sodalities. The amount received for the purpose in 1924 was 313 rupees. The Sodality of the Immaculate Conception (gentlemen) of *Mangalore* was very generous. The same may be said of the Sodality of the *Senior Students of our St. Xavier's College,* Palamcottah. This year the *Mangalore* Sodality has undertaken to distribute Catholic Literature directly, and of late sent us a big order for our publications.

Results of spreading Catholic Literature. It is difficult, not to say impossible to give an account of the results of this campaign.

Inquiries. In one year, 600 Hindus, received our publications; some 60 asked for more and for explanations also, and showed a real interest in the study of Religion. It is only in the next world, that we shall know the history of each of our leaflets and booklets. I must say however that God encourages us a good deal by the fact that a good many of our publications have become very popular and run to several editions.

Conversions. Better than this, we have had the consolation of witnessing several conversions due, after God's grace, to the reading of our publications. I insert in this letter a small sheet in which you will read the conversion of two young men due to the reading of some of our tracts that had been sent to one of their non-Catholic friends, who did not read them but who gave them to be read. God's ways are marvellous. These two converts are here now. One is now studying for the priesthood. His friend, I hope will imitate him.

***** But there are many difficulties. Very few people know English in India and our I. C. T. S. publications are in English. ****

Pamphlets and debates stir interest in Press. I enclose two pamphlets (we have published others like them) intended to stimulate the zeal of Sodalists. One is "*The Best Alms, or a Plea for the Apostleship of the Press*", and the other on the same subject is "*Reflections for Sodalists*". I also enclose the minutes of a debate participated in by our Sodalists on the respective merits of *the Press and the Platform* in the spreading of Catholic Truth in India.

College Sodalists silence anti-Christian lecturer. Last January, a certain Chandra Varma, a militant Hindu who is touring India to prevent conversions to Christianity and to reconvert converts to Hinduism (paganism) came to Trichinopoly to lecture against Jesus Christ. His theory is "Why become a Christian? Christ is a myth!" He attracts thousands of Hindus, especially students who might have some desire of becoming Christians. His lecturing in Trichy was a good occasion for Sodalists to be apostles of the Press. The Senior Sodalists of the Immaculate Conception, college students, undertook to spread leaflets and pamphlets to the people who went to hear Varma. Some of them challenged him publicly and, I am glad to say, silenced him, so much so that the chairman of the meeting, a pagan, congratulated publicly one of our best Sodalists for his courage and his pluck in coming and defending his religion in public, and proposed him as an example to the young men professing the Hindu religion!

On that occasion, the I. C. T. S. published some 4 leaflets in 4 days. Poor Varma was put to shame especially in the last leaflet "*Is Mr. Chandra Varma a Myth?*" in which the same line of argument used by Mr. Varma to prove Jesus Christ a myth was made use of against Varma's own existence. ******

L. Lacombe S. J.
Editor of "*The Morning Star*"

*** The Sodality is doing well in this diocese, perhaps owing to the fact that over ten years ago, a copy of the Official Directory of the Sodality of Our Lady was sent to every priest with an advertisement for the Queen's Work. *****

**** My experience of nearly forty years, teaches me that the Director who follows the Rules of the Sodality will infallibly make a success of it.

I am afraid there has not been much practical instruction about Sodalities given either in Theology or in Tertianship.

In our parishes, the danger to Sodalities are activities like basket-ball and card-parties, with apostolic work left out entirely; others are entirely satisfied with the monthly General Communion, etc.; they forget the distinctive feature of the Sodality which is the instruction or exhortation appropriate to the state of life of the members; but it takes care in the preparation as well as tact in the delivering, and the 7th capital sin is the enemy; that feature, however, is the one which makes the meeting interesting if anything.

**** There is a long list of books for Sodalists given in *Règles et Reglements des Congregations* by Fr. Pierre Brucker, S. J., which should be translated for this country, so poor in that line.

CHRONICLE

The Croatian Sodalist-Pilgrims, numbering over 100 had a devotional meeting in the Church of S. Ignatius on May 23th. Father Alfirevic preached and Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament was given by Rt. Rev. Bauer, Archbishop of Zagreb. Father Bangha also addressed them in the name of the Prima Primaria and the Central Secretariate.

A large number of the Children of Mary who had come to Rome for the canonization of St. Magdalen Sophy Barat, founder of the Madames of the Sacred Heart, took occasion to visit the Church of St. Ignatius, where the Prima Primaria is located.

Many other Sodalists (Spanish, Portuguese, Polish, English, Irish, etc.), are coming to Rome with national pilgrimages, although the shortness of their stay and special circumstances forbid special Sodality solemnities for them. Two large pilgrimages of Sodalists are looked for from the United States in August.

Father Henry de la Chaise of the Province of Champagne, died suddenly a short time ago in France. He had worked very zealously for the restoration of the Sodalities of Our Lady there, and was the founder and first editor of the new Sodality periodical, " Les Cahiers de Notre Dame „. The Sodality lost a man of great promise in him. We recommend his soul to the prayers and Holy Sacrifices of all our readers. R. I. P.

Second Centenary of the Canonization of St. Aloysius Gonzaga, Patron of Young Students. Many persons interested in the young are now deliberating upon the most fruitful way of observing this centenary. The question is how to celebrate it not only with external splendor, but with the greatest possible good to souls. When some definite conclusions have been reached, we shall hasten to inform our readers. In the meantime, this is certain: we must see to it that in this Aloysian apostolate, the Sodalities of Our Lady, especially those for youths be first in the field and second to none in effectiveness.

A Sodalist writes in "*Paginas Marianas*", a magazine published by Sodalists in Vitoria, Spain:

" On the tenth of May, we commenced the Six Sundays in honor of our secondary patron, St. Aloysius Gonzaga.

After the elevation, at Mass, our Director ascends the pulpit and reads slowly, with pauses, the meditation for each Sunday.

I don't know how the others feel about it, but for my part, after hearing the examples of compunction penance and chastity of St. Aloysius, it makes me shiver to hear the little question: "***And what are YOU doing?***"

Sodality Propaganda

All Reverend Directors of Sodalities

are urgently requested to help the Central Secretariate to spread the different numbers of the *Silva Mariana*. To make it easier to cooperate with us, we are sending card with this number of the " *Acies Ordinata* ", begging the recipients to mail them to non-Jesuit priests of their acquaintance.

There would be many more promoters of the Sodality, if they knew it well. Only lately a secular priest chanced upon a copy of our " *Little Catechism of the Sodality* ", and was so taken with it that he ordered copies of all the literature which we had upon the subject. " *If I had only known before this, the true idea of the Sodality,* " he said, " *I would have had a better opinion of it and I would have governed my own quite differently.* " So please aid us to find other friends for the Sodality by **sending out the cards** referred to above!

Vatican Missionary Exposition

Boy-Scout Pilgrimage

At present an immense pilgrimage of Boy-Scouts is being organized to come to Rome during the summer. Doubtless, many Sodalists will be included in its ranks. Directors would do well to excite the interest of their Boy-Scout Sodalists in the Missions and to speak to them especially of the Exposition. Such as come from the British Isles will doubtless have visited the Empire Exhibition at Wembley, and will in all probability be glad of the opportunity to compare it with the Vatican " World's Fair ". Directors, too, who have acquaintance with those who are in charge of the program for the Boy-Scouts Pilgrimage, might suggest the advisability of putting the Exposition in a prominent place. It is hardly necessary to point out the appeal contained in the life of many of the foreign missionaries for the Boy-Scout. We have every reason to hope for vocations to both the secular and the regular priesthood from this pilgrimage. Every priest of us owes it to his sacred character to do his utmost to bring more workers into the Vineyard. A good word for the Exposition may do more to promote a vocation than much exhortation.

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Editor: *Lawrence E. O'Keeffe, S. J.*
Superiorum permissu.

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